

June 1 , 2014

TO: ASMI Board of Director's & Committee Members

FROM: Claudia Hogue, Foodservice Director

RE: Foodservice Program Update

This report is a recap of the foodservice program activities to date for FY14 (July, 2013 – April, 2014). In addition to the foodservice program, staff is also responsible for co-managing the consumer public relations and advertising programs.

**FOODSERVICE PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:**

- Generate increased foodservice awareness and usage via Alaska seafood brand-oriented marketing programs.
- Achieve differentiation between wild Alaska, farmed seafood (including specialty farms) and other seafood sources and other proteins.
- Maintain the highest-value perception in targeted foodservice segments.

**FOODSERVICE STRATEGIES:**

- Build awareness among foodservice operators and their patrons for Alaska seafood's unique features: Alaska, Wild, Sustainable, Pure, and Flavor/Texture.
- Position Alaska seafood as a healthy alternative to other proteins.
- Expand usage and menu branding of wild Alaska seafood (including value-added products) with target operator and distributor accounts
- Build on established leadership position for ASMI in the areas of seafood education, training and menu development.
- Develop partnership position for ASMI in providing consumer-oriented marketing programs.
- Maximize Alaska seafood's position and penetration with high-volume broadline and seafood specialty distributors.
- Heighten Alaska seafood industry awareness and involvement in the foodservice program and continue to educate so that the industry can meet the needs of the marketplace.

**OPERATOR PROMOTIONS:**

National account promotions have been very effective in expanding the usage and menu branding of Alaska seafood with target operator accounts. Working with key decision makers within these accounts, ASMI develops customized promotional programs that may include the following components: merchandising materials, menu branding allowances, advertising, research, waitstaff incentives, training seminars, etc. In addition, ASMI also has a number of

themed, species-specific promotional materials that are available to all foodservice operators year-round. These include posters, table tents, menu sheets, waitstaff tip cards, buttons, etc. ASMI also has materials designed especially for kids.

There continues to be a strong interest in promoting seafood from Alaska and most of these promotions are backed with significant financial support from the chains themselves. **The following national operator accounts are partnering with ASMI this fiscal year to promote the Alaska brand and logo with customized point-of-sale materials, menus and consumer advertising.**

- **Arby's** – Alaska Pollock
- **Captain D's** – Alaska Salmon
- **Club Corp** – All Species
- **Crabby Mike's Seafood Company** – Alaska Salmon, Sole & Snow Crab
- **Denny's Restaurants** – Alaska Salmon
- **Dine Around Seattle** – All Species
- **Fish City Grill/ Half Shells** – Alaska Salmon, & Snow Crab
- **Guest Services, Inc.** – Alaska Salmon & Pollock
- **Jack in the Box** – Alaska Pollock
- **Jason's Deli** – Alaska Salmon
- **Joey's Restaurants** – Alaska Pollock
- **KFC Hawaii** – Alaska Pollock
- **Long John Silver's** – Alaska Pollock
- **Macy's Department Stores** – Alaska Halibut & Salmon
- **Market Broiler Restaurants** – Alaska Cod, Snow Crab & Halibut
- **McCormick & Schmick's** – Alaska Salmon
- **McGuire Management Group** – Alaska Salmon, King & Snow Crab
- **Morton's Steakhouse** – Alaska King Crab & Halibut
- **N.Y. Yankees/Legends Hospitality** – All Species
- **Oceanaire Seafood Room** – Alaska King Crab & Halibut
- **Rockfish Seafood Grill** – Alaska Salmon, Pollock & Sole
- **Saltwater Restaurants** – Alaska Snow & King Crab
- **Showmar's Restaurants** – Alaska Pollock & Sole
- **Smokey Bones Bar & Fire Grill** – Alaska Cod
- **Sonic Drive-In** – Alaska Pollock & Surimi Seafood
- **Stillwater Grill** – Alaska Salmon, Halibut & Sole
- **The Fresh Fish Co.** – All Species
- **White Castle** – Alaska Pollock
- **Wienerschnitzel** – Alaska Pollock

## **Colleges & Universities:**

- **Grinnell College** – All Species
- **Skidmore** – Alaska King Crab
- **Stanford University** – All Species
- **University of Massachusetts** – Amherst – All Species
- **University of North Dakota** – All Species
- **University of Texas** – Alaska Rockfish

## **DISTRIBUTOR PROMOTIONS:**

Distributors are a critical link in the foodservice sales path because they sell to chain accounts, foodservice management companies and independent operators on a daily basis. The distributor exerts a high degree of influence over operators in their purchasing decisions. While independent and seafood specialty distributors play a vital role in supplying fresh products to certain segments of the industry, broadline distributors are an important force, especially in terms of frozen seafood products and their penetration of all foodservice segments. In addition, broadline distributors are also putting increased focus on fresh seafood sales.

Historically, ASMI broadline distributor promotions have been heavily involved with individual operating companies and divisions. Within the past year, the landscape has shifted towards a corporate controlled environment also known as Category Management. Category Management now controls the entire process from purchasing, brand development, quality control and marketing (training and promotional activities at the division level). ASMI has a unique opportunity to partner with top broadline distributors at the corporate level to facilitate the growth of the Alaska seafood brand and build sales.

**The following distributors are partnering with ASMI during FY14 on all-species sales incentive and brand awareness promotions:**

- **Cash – Wa Distributing**
- **Del Monte Meat Co.**
- **Foodservices of America Corporate**
- **Gordon Foodservice Corporate – U.S.**
- **Gordon Foodservice – Canada**
- **Martin Bros. Distributing**
- **Performance Foodservice – North Center**
- **Performance Foodservice – Springfield**
- **Reinhart Foodservice Corporate**
- **Samuel & Son Seafood Co.**

- **Sysco Corporate – U.S.**
- **Sysco Corporate – Canada**
- **US Foods – Western Region (8 Divisions)**

## **TRADE SHOWS & CONFERENCES:**

**National Association of College & University Foodservice (NACUFS):** ASMI participated as a platinum sponsor at the NACUFS conference in Minneapolis from July 10- 13. Over 1,500 food and beverage decision makers attend this conference from colleges and universities around the country. ASMI's booth during the trade show sampled Alaska seafood and distributed literature. Alaska seafood was also featured during conference meals. ASMI Chef Congress member Dan Enos from the Oceanire Seafood Room in Boston and National Accounts representative Jann Dickerson spoke to a packed room on sustainable and affordable seafood species and applications appropriate for college and university dining.

**Les Dames d 'Escoffier National Conference (LDEI):** ASMI sponsored and attended the LDEI national conference in Austin, from October 24-26. LDEI is the premier organization of influential professional women who are committed to the advancement of education and philanthropy in food, beverage and hospitality. At the conference, staff networked and sampled various Alaska seafood species including Alaska salmon, halibut, snow crab and weathervane scallops. With 26 chapters around the country, LDEI represents the most influential women in the food industry.

**National Restaurant Association/Marketing Executives Group (MEG):** ASMI is a sponsor of both the fall and spring MEG meetings which target marketing directors from the top national and regional chains in the U.S. MEG has become a regular event for ASMI and a number of promotions have resulted from association with this group over the years.

**International Corporate Chefs Association (ICCA):** The ICCA is the only chefs association designed exclusively for corporate chefs from the nation's largest chains and multi-unit operations. As one of the founding sponsors, ASMI has the opportunity to network, educate and develop relationships with key corporate executive chefs throughout the year at a number of ICCA events.

**Culinary Institute of America (CIA)/Worlds of Healthy Flavors Conference:** With continued emphasis on health, ASMI sponsored the World of Healthy Flavors Conference in January which brings together leading experts from Harvard University in nutrition research. The goal of this retreat is to assist corporate chefs and senior managers from top national accounts in expanding options for healthy meal choices. As a key sponsor, ASMI is in a unique position to

help educate chefs on how they can incorporate Alaska seafood onto the menus of America's top chains. Alaska seafood was featured in multiple demos and menu planning activities for attendees to work with. Alaska salmon, snow crab and cod were spotlighted for their heart healthy benefits, versatility and menu appeal for menu decision-makers from chain restaurants, hotels and volume foodservice including ARAMARK, Darden Restaurants, Harvard University, McDonald's and Panera.

**Women Chefs & Restaurateurs:** ASMI foodservice was a gold level sponsor at the 2014 Women Chefs & Restaurateurs (WCR) National Conference held in Chicago, March 9-11. This year's conference theme was sustainability and ASMI presented on the importance of responsible fisheries management. At the closing gala, Alaska Chef Congress member Jesse Cool was presented with the lifetime achievement award for her commitment to sustainability.

**Seafood Expo North America:** ASMI participated again this year in the renamed Seafood Expo North America. ASMI continued with a "green" booth showcasing the artwork of Rie Muñoz, one of Alaska's most recognized artists. This year the RFM certification program continued to play a primary focus. This is a shared project with the retail, technical and international programs.

**College & University Special Events:** ASMI continues to partner with individual schools to promote sustainable Alaska seafood. Special events are a great way to create "teachable moments" for students and staff and create excitement on campus. Over the past few months a number of promotions have taken place on campuses around the country. For many students, college is their first opportunity to develop life-long eating habits and these types of events are a great way to create new Alaska seafood consumers.

**Grinnell College:** Grinnell College is a private liberal arts college in Grinnell, Iowa and known for its rigorous academics and tradition of social responsibility. In September the college hosted an Alaska Seafood themed dinner. Students dined on Alaska Smoked Salmon Pizza, Weathervane Scallop Linguine, Teriyaki Glazed Alaska Salmon, Tamarind Glazed Alaska Rockfish, Wok Fried Alaska Snow Crab, and Chili Garlic Alaska Pollock. In addition to the dinner menu, display fish were flown in and ASMI literature was distributed to students by Alaska native and Grinnell student Lydia Mills, '14.

**UMass Amherst:** In October, UMass Amherst celebrated its annual **Alaska Seafood Week**. Alaska Chef Congress member Chef Barton Seaver assisted in feeding over 4,000 students. Alaska halibut, cod, rockfish and king crab were served in the University's new dining hall. After dinner, Chef Seaver and Marketing Specialist Karl Johan Uri spoke to the students and staff

about the importance of sustainable seafood and the coastal communities that depend on the commercial fishing industry.

UMass utilizes these events to talk with students about sustainability, promote healthy eating and build community among students and faculty as the academic year kicks off. UMass is currently No. 3 nation-wide for “best campus food” in the 2013 edition of the Princeton Review’s Best 377 College and takes much pride in serving only sustainable food to their students.

**Stanford University:** October 6-12 was Stanford University’s Sustainable Seafood Week. Alaska Seafood was featured in all of the dining halls throughout the University during the week-long celebration. Kirk and Heather Hardcastle from Juneau were on campus speaking to students about sustainable seafood and Kirk also led a fish taco cooking class featuring Alaska salmon.

**University of North Dakota:** ASMI Foodservice partnered with the University of North Dakota for the first time this year with a Sustainable Seafood Luncheon and Dinner in October. ASMI foodservice staff visited the campus and met with student leaders, faculty and staff over lunch discussing the benefits of a seafood rich diet and sustainable fishing practices. ASMI’s *Surimi Seafood Cobb Salad* was served. Later that evening all three dining halls on campus featured a wide array of Alaska seafood including: Alaska Salmon, halibut, cod, rockfish and surimi seafood.

In February, the University held an “Iron Chef” style challenge over the course of 2 weeks. This year’s secret ingredient was wild Alaska sockeye salmon. The students enjoyed working with the product and learning more about cooking seafood.

**Skidmore College:** For the 3<sup>rd</sup> year ASMI has sponsored the ACF Culinary Conference & Competition held at Skidmore College. This year’s event held over three days in early January featured educational sessions, demonstrations and tastings and an ACF sanctioned culinary competition. 40 chefs comprising 10 teams and representing 5 states participated, including: Skidmore College, SUNY – Albany, Indiana University of Pennsylvania Academy of Culinary Arts, Williams College, Ithaca College, University of New Hampshire, Saint Lawrence University and Stonebridge Restaurant.

**University of Texas Chef’s Symposium:** ASMI foodservice participated in the second annual UTexas Chefs Symposium in July. This was a small event for 30 chefs from Texas colleges and universities, with high quality interaction between the attendees and the presenters as well as hands-on cooking opportunities. Attendees were able to experience filleting and preparing Alaska cod, rockfish and salmon. ASMI representative, Jann Dickerson gave a presentation on Alaska seafood and sustainability. There was also a chef seafood demonstration by Chef Mayberry (UTexas) and Chef Jet Tila of *Alaska Rockfish Roulade with Citrus Beurre Blanc*.

**Culinary Institute of America (CIA) – *Menus of Change*:** The *Menus of Change* leadership initiative is a partnership of the CIA and Harvard School of Public Health that is working to create a long-term, practical vision for the integration of nutrition, environmental stewardship, the culinary arts and innovation within the business of American foodservice. ASMI is one of the founding sponsors and also has a seat on the Sustainable Business Leadership Council. The next summit will take place in June in Boston.

#### **TRADE EDUCATION:**

**Canned Salmon Recipes:** At the October 2013 board meeting, staff was directed to promote canned pink salmon in the domestic market. The overall strategy at foodservice is to generate awareness and product usage. Consumers are looking for new, great tasting, healthy seafood menu items and canned pink salmon offers foodservice operators a profitable fish alternative.

Working with consulting Chef Bart Goldberg, the ASMI foodservice program developed 10 new canned pink salmon recipes primarily targeting breakfast and lunch day-parts. The recipes were developed for use in both non-commercial and commercial restaurants and have interesting, on-trend flavor profiles. The new recipes include the following:

- Alaska Canned Pink Salmon Kimchi Rice Bowl
- Alaska Canned Pink Salmon Philly Cheese “Steak”
- Alaska Canned Pink Salmon Bahn Mi Wrap
- Savory Alaska Canned Pink Salmon Pancakes
- BBQ Alaska Canned Pink Salmon Flatbread
- Alaska Canned Pink Salmon Breakfast Pie with Sautéed Mushrooms and Spinach
- Alaska Canned Pink Salmon, Creamed Spinach and Bacon Benedict
- Alaska Canned Pink Salmon Quinoa Cakes
- Alaska Canned Pink Salmon Kimchi Burger
- Alaska Canned Pink Salmon Potato Pancakes

A new Alaska canned pink salmon brochure is in development and will be available in May. ASMI staff will use these new recipes for foodservice PR as well as new menu ideas for distributor and operator accounts.

**Foodservice Research:** The foodservice program relies heavily on consumer research to help develop overall program strategies and to educate operators and distributors about consumer attitudes and preferences toward seafood in general. ASMI recently completed two new research projects to investigate what new trends and changes have emerged with consumers over the past two years. The research also looked at issues such as sustainability and overall consumer satisfaction with seafood offerings at QSR, fast casual and casual restaurants.

An additional piece of the research also looked at fish sandwiches and what consumers look for when ordering at chain restaurants. A new brochure highlighting both of these research projects was developed as a sales tool to help demonstrate consumer preference for Alaska seafood.

**CIA/Pro Chef:** The Culinary Institute of America (CIA) offers a media educational venue through their on-line site, *ProChef.com* and ASMI has partnered with them to create an ASMI micro-site. This custom program includes streaming videos, interactive web pages, photography and informative text highlighting Alaska seafood. Recently, a social media component has also been added to increase traffic to the site and encourage dialogue about Alaska seafood. The goal is to better educate the foodservice community about Alaska seafood and its use in today's menu applications suitable for a range of foodservice operations and segments. The Culinary Institute of America is the largest and most prestigious culinary school in the U.S.

#### **ADVERTISING:**

The foodservice program continues to advertise in a variety of foodservice trade publications. Consumer research confirms that taste is the leading driver of increased seafood consumption at restaurants. ASMI developed a new campaign that positions Alaska seafood as the place for great tasting, craveable seafood with beautiful food photography. There are also three versions of the ad with interchangeable plate shoots for salmon, whitefish and crab. Ads are currently running in the following print and online foodservice trade publications:

- ***Nation's Restaurant News – print and online***
- ***Food Arts***
- ***Plate Magazine – print and online***
- ***QSR - print***
- ***Food Management – print and online***
- ***Flavor & The Menu***
- ***Santé Magazine***

#### **FOODSERVICE PUBLIC RELATIONS:**

Foodservice public relations is targeted to the foodservice trade which includes chefs, distributors, marketing and purchasing executives, culinary schools and anyone associated with the foodservice business. These activities include editorials, product releases and news articles in foodservice publications, as well as special events that promote Alaska seafood to operators and influential food editors.



**International Foodservice Editors Conference (IFEC):** In October, ASMI participated in the annual IFEC conference in Portland. IFEC provides a face-to-face forum for ASMI to pitch story ideas to foodservice editors and communication professionals. Over 200 individuals are involved in this organization and offer ASMI a great opportunity to network and educate participants about Alaska seafood.

During the Chef Showcase, Chef Steven Ward of the Portland Doubletree by Hilton prepared two dishes for the Alaska Seafood Chef Showcase booth, a double-sized area at the center of the room. The first was miso Alaska black cod with foraged mushrooms, baby bok choy, rice noodles, and cilantro, and the second was Alaska sockeye skewers with a honey bourbon habanera glaze, pickled radishes, and arugula, with both receiving rave reviews from attendees.

One of the highlights of the conference is the “Betty” lunch. Partnering with the Chilean Blueberry Council, ASMI sponsored Tuesday’s buffet lunch and supplied product for Cedar Planked Smoked Alaska Salmon with Blueberry Compote.

**International Association of Culinary Professionals (IACP):** ASMI Foodservice was a Bronze level sponsor at this year’s international convention held in Chicago. IACP is a worldwide forum for the development and exchange of information, knowledge and inspiration within the professional food and beverage community. During this year’s convention ASMI once again partnered with Kikkoman and featured wild Alaska Smoked Salmon “Carpaccio” during the information fair.

Please let me know if you have any questions. Thanks!